

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7843
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIURT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USICA WASHDC

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SOPN, SY, US, EG
SUBJ: SYRIAN NEWSPAPER GLOATS OVER PRESIDENT CARTER'S LONDON
TIMES INTERVIEW

1. SYRIAN DAILY AL-BAATH (ONLY PAPER PUBLISHED MAY DAY)
DEVOTED LEAD COLUMN AND EDITORIAL TPI"ANALYSIS" OF PRESIDENT
CARTER'S INTERVIEW WITH TRUDY FELDMAN. LEAD ARTICLE, WHICH
IS CAPTIONED: "CARTER SHATTERS SADAT'S CONTENTIONS REGARDING
AN EXPECTED AMERICAN SURPORSE," CLAIMS THAT EGYPTIAN OFFI-
CIALS, WHO WERE BEHIND RECENT SPATE OF ARTICLES IN ARAB PRESS
CLAIMING PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD MAKE A DRAMATIC ANNOUNCEMENT
SUPPORTING THE RIGHT OF THE PALESTINIANS TOGASTABLISH THEIR
OWN STATE, WERE PROVED WRONG. ARTICLE ALSO SPEAKS OF "CARTER
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GOINB BACK ON THE CONCEPT OF AN AIRCRAFT SALES PACKAGE."
AL-BAATH ASSERTS THAT "PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRONOUNCEMENTS
HAVE CREATED CHAOS WITHIN THE SADAT REGIME SINCE THEY
DISPROVED SADAT'S CALIM THAT AN AMERICAN PROPOSAL WOULD END
BEGIN'S INTRANSIGENCE TOWARDS SADAT'S INITIATIVE." ARTICLE
ALSO NOTES FONMIN KAMEL'S REQUEST TO RECEIVE THE FULL TEXT
OF CARTER'S STATEMENT. OVERALL IMPRESSION CREATED BY

ARTICLE IS THAT CARTER'S INTERVIEW IS ANOTHER NAIL IN THE COFFIN OF STADT'S POLICIES.

2. IN AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED: "WILL SOMEBODY TOMORRWO COME UP WITH JUSTIFICATION FOR CARTER'S STATEMENT?" MUHAMMAD MANSOUR COMPLAINS THAT THE ARABS CONTINUE TO WAGER ON THE AMERICANS INSTEAD OF "TAKING SOME SORT OF ACTION AGAINST AMERICA AND ITS REGIONAL INTEREST AS A RESPONSE WHICH WOULD HELP AMERICA RECONSIDER ITS POSITIONS." HE SARCASTICALLY PREDICTS THAT IN THE COMING DAYS SOME ARAB OFFICIALS AND NEWSPAPERS WOULD FIND JUSTIFICATIONS SWR CARTER'S "HOSTILE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE ARABS." HE SCORNS EFFORTS TO WORK WITHIN THE US POLITICAL SYSTEM TO CHANGE AMERICAN POLICIES. SPECIFICALLY MENTIONING ATTEMPTS TO FORM "AN ARAB LOBBY" AND CONTENDS THAT THE ARABS NEED TO OVERCOME THE ROOT CAUSES OF THEIR CURRENT PREDICAMENT (I.E. SADAT'S POLICIES).

3. IN CONCLUDING, MANSOUR ECHOSE THEME HEARD IN LAST WEEK'S PRESS THAT SYRIA WILL NOT "FORGET OR OVERLOOK WHAT HAS HAPPENDE". HE DECLARES THAT ARAB SOLIDARITY IS A PRESSING MATTER BUT THAT IT WHOULD NOT BE USED TO "COVER UP OTHERS' TREACHERIES."

4. A SECOND EDITORIAL BY ABD AL-ILAH AL-MALLAH OF BAATH, ATTACKS THE PROPOSED SALE OF F-5'S TO EGYPT ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WILL CONT CONTRIBUTE ANYGHING TO THE ARABS IN THEIR CONFLICT
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WITH ISREEL AND WILL ULTIMATELY BE A BRUDEN TO THE EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE. HE ARGUES THAT TRAINING PILOTS ON F-5S WILL CAUSE A DICHOTOMY IN AIR FORCE BETWEEN THEM AND WITH PERSONNEL TRAINED ON SOVIET EQUIPMENT AND WILL FURTHER ESTRANGE EGYPT FROM SOVIET UNION. FINALLY, HE CONTENDS THAT SADAT WILL USE THE PLANES TO FULFILL HIS "OBLIGATION" IN AFRICA HAVING ALREADY ANNOUNCED THAT THE OCTOBER WAR WOULD BE EGYPT'S LAST WITH ISRAEL.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH US CLARIFICATIONS REGARDING INTERVIEW HAVE APPEARED IN EGYPTIAN MEDIA AND OTHER ARAB BROADCASTS, WE DO NOT EXPECT SYRIAN PRESS TO TAKE MUCH HEED. FELDMAN ARTICLE, AS WRITTEN, IS SIMPLY TOO TEMPTING FOR SYRIA'S PROPAGANDA PURPOSES.

PELLETREAU

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